



Mark Jarrell at Tabacon Resort in the shadow of active volcano Arenal. While it hasn't had a major eruption in many years, four people were killed while observing the volcano up close in August 2000. Jerry Redden, outclimbing his out-of-shape partners, made it more than halfway up Arenal in 1996 before the venting gases and tinkling lava rocks falling about him caused him to reconsider the wisdom of our adventure and contemplate the meaning of the words "active volcano."



A typical school house. The children all wear uniforms and are neat and clean despite walking along dusty roads. Note the soccer field. Every town has a school, a soccer field and a Catholic church. Three towns actually had basketball courts.



The pool at Tabacon Resort, which is filled with water heated naturally from springs flowing from the Arenal volcano.

The Fifth Step in Renovation

In April, Kevin Downing, CGCS, Willoughby Golf Club, and I found ourselves facing major summer reconstruction projects. Kevin was going for a complete 18-hole renovation, while I was looking at rebuilding and replanting ten greens to TifEagle. The long, hot summer ahead of us convinced us to insert one more step in the reconstruction process: take a week off and seek adventure and relaxation in Costa Rica before the work begins!

Costa Rica is an incredibly beautiful, diverse, and friendly country. This was Kevin's first visit and my second, having traveled there six years ago with Jerry Redden, CGCS, and Mike McLaughlin. Costa Rica has become a favorite destination for many Americans and Europeans, from "eco-tourists" to those hoping to land a record black marlin in the Pacific off the coast at Quepos. As a change of pace from my usual column (and because

MARK MY WORDS



Mark Jarrell, CGCS

I can't write poetry like Joel Jackson), I thought my peers might enjoy a photo journey to this amazing country.



This was the highlight of the trip. This adrenaline rush at Monteverde is called Sky Trek. You are given a small harness, helmet, gloves, safety line, and pulley to go flying over and through the rainforest on eleven different cable runs. In this photo, Kevin Downing is seen arriving on the first "bunny" run designed to ease your jitters and instill confidence that you haven't lost your mind for paying \$35 to produce a heart attack.



The Pacific Ocean south of Dominical, a sleepy little surfing town. A larger town to the north, Jaco Beach, is also popular with American surfers. If you're not into surfing, you can ride horses along the beach.



Even though it was the dry season, there was still enough water flowing from the mountains to the oceans to provide picturesque scenes like this and an exciting whitewater rafting adventure on the Rio Toro. As of this writing, I still haven't received the photos of the rafting trip I paid for, which may be the only negative thing I can say about our entire visit to Costa Rica.



A view of the dry countryside on the rocky road from Arenal to Monteverde. Costa Rica receives as much as 150 inches of rainfall a year, but April is the driest month. Their tourist season is similar to Florida's - most visitors have left the country by the end of March. It was interesting to note full staffing at the various hotels despite being "off season", with staff sometimes outnumbering guests.